

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 08477 161114Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 IO-13 DOE-11 SOE-02 DOEE-00
ACDA-12 SSM-03 /108 W
-----005428 161122Z /17

O 161108Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6779

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 08477

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG PBOR IS EG US
SUBJECT: AMOCO INCIDENT

REF: TEL AVIV 3539

1. HOPE WE CAN CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS WITH ISRAELIS ON
AMOCO INCIDENT IN POLITICAL RATHER THAN MILITARY CHANNELS.
YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT THAT NEITHER EGYPT NOR AMOCO WILL
VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO GROUP OF ISRAELI GEOGRAPHERS BOARDING
RIG. JUDGING FROM PAST EXPERIENCE, THERE IS ALWAYS DANGER
THAT WHERE ISRAELI MILITARY INVOLVED, THE TEMPTATION IS
GREAT TO FORCE THE ISSUE IN SOME WAY. PERHAPS ISRAELIS
HAVE NO INTENTION TO FORCE THEIR WAY ABOARD RIG, BUT WE
SHOULD BE ALERT TO THIS POSSIBILITY AND AS NECESSARY URGE
THEM TO AVOID ANY SUCH ACTION. IN ANY EVENT, IT HARDLY
SEEMS NECESSARY PHYSICALLY TO BOARD RIG TO ESTABLISH ITS
POSITION.

2. QUITE APART FROM THE DISPUTE OVER CARTOGRAPHIC FACTS
ON THE GROUND, AN ISRAELI EFFORT NOW OR IN THE FUTURE TO
RESOLVE THE RIG INCIDENT BY NAVAL ACTION OF SOME SORT
WOULD HAVE UNFORTUNATE REPERCUSSIONS HERE. COMING IN THE
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WAKE OF LARGE-SCALE ISRAELI INVASION OF SOUTH LEBANON,
WHICH REGARDLESS OF PROVOCATION PROMPTING IT IS HIGHLY
EMBARRASSING TO SADAT AT HOME AND IN ARAB WORLD, ANY CON-
CURRENT OR SEQUENTIAL ISRAELI NAVAL ACTION AGAINST DIRECT
EGYPTIAN INTEREST SUCH AS AMOCO RIG WILL MAKE IT EVEN
MORE DIFFICULT FOR SADAT TO AGREE TO EARLY RESUMPTION OF
PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE SINCE RIG

CONTROVERSY IS BECOMING PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. IF ISRAELIS HAVE INTEREST IN MINIMIZING DAMAGE TO SADAT'S ABILITY TO CONTINUE NEGOTIATIONS, AND WE NOTE PRIMIN BEGIN HAS INDICATED ISRAELI DESIRE TO PROCEED WITH TALKS, THEY WILL BE WELL ADVISED TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE RIG IS NOW IN PLACE AND THAT DRILLING IS UNDERWAY AND QUIETLY DROP THE WHOLE AFFAIR. IN ITSELF THE INCIDENT IS SMALL AND UNIMPORTANT, BUT IF PHYSICALLY FORCED AT THIS PARTICULAR TIME, IT COULD BECOME ANOTHER "SPOILER" IN THE PEACE PROCESS. ELTS

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Message Attributes

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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DISPUTES, TERRITORIAL WATERS, EXPLORATORY DRILLING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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